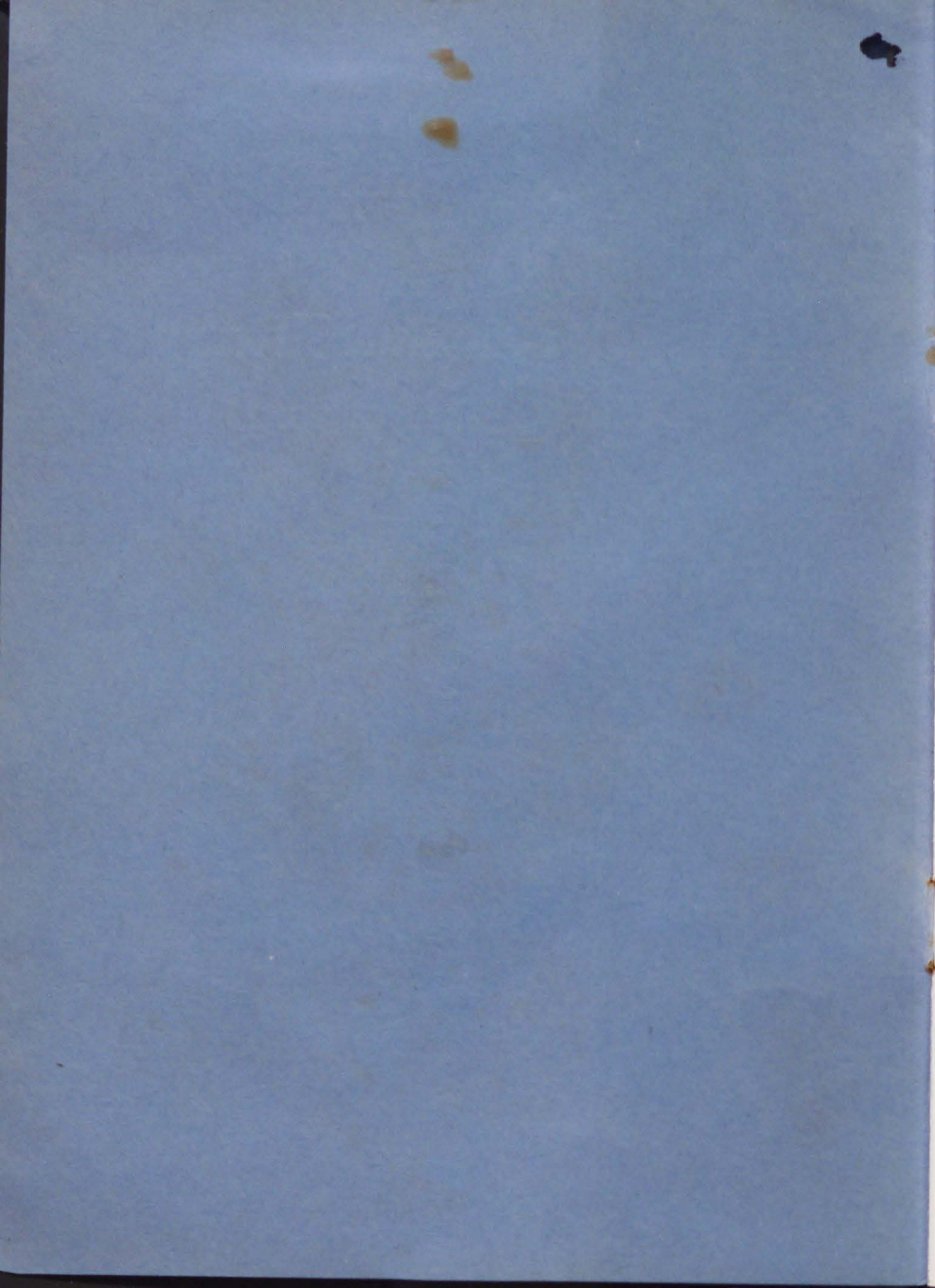


The Centennial  
of the  
Peabody Institute Library  
Peabody, Massachusetts

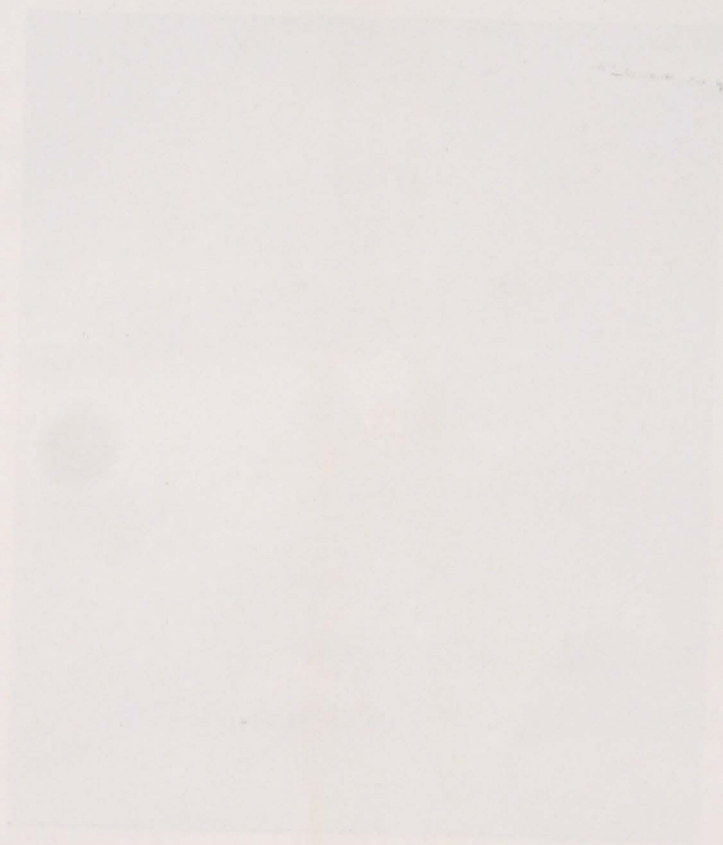
EDUCATION—

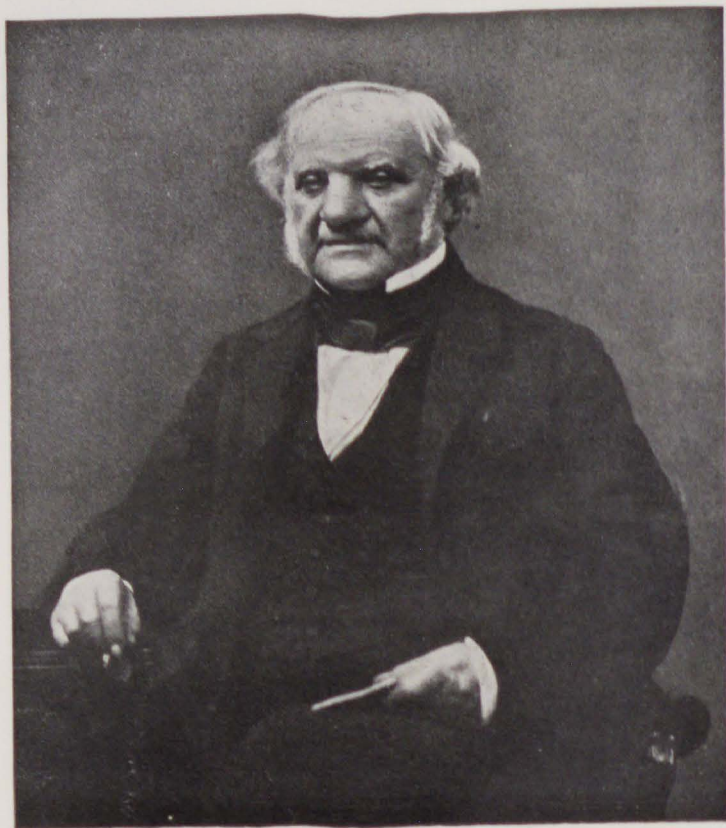
*"A Debt Due From Present  
To Future Generations"*

— GEORGE PEABODY



2013.32.1





George Peabody  
1868.

GEORGE PEABODY

*"The Great Benefactor"*

1795 - 1869

BY

RUTH HENDERSON HILL

FOR

THE CENTENNIAL

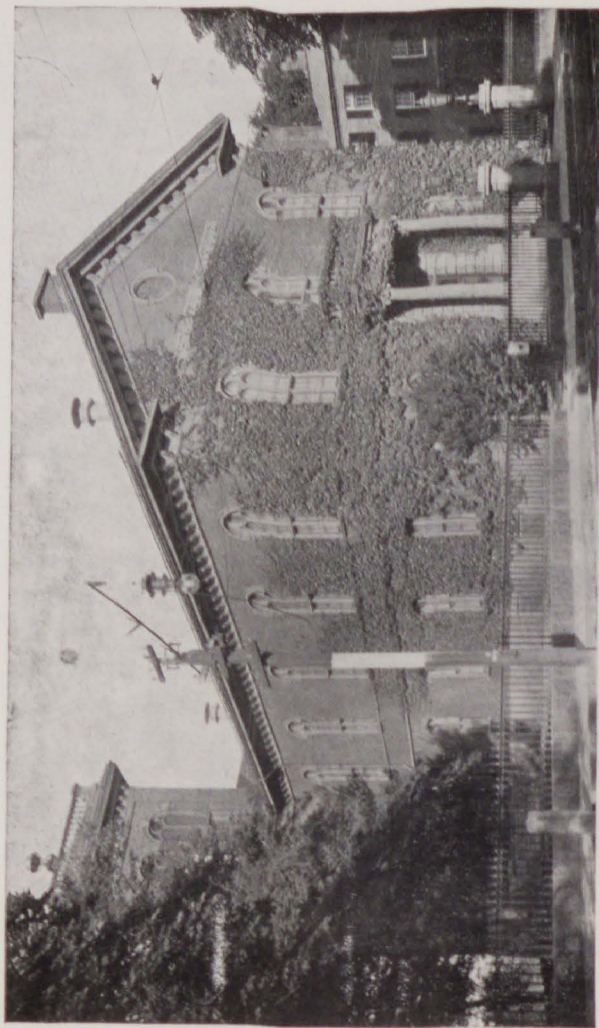
OF THE

PEABODY INSTITUTE

PEABODY, MASSACHUSETTS

1953





PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY, PEABODY, MASS.  
Founded by George Peabody, 1852

## THE PEABODY INSTITUTE

The old town of Danvers celebrated the One Hundredth Anniversary of its separation from Salem in 1752, on the 16th of June, 1852. George Peabody was invited to be present, but not being able to do so, he sent a letter from London, in which he enclosed a sealed envelope, to be opened when the toasts were being proposed at the dinner, which was to commemorate the event.

When the seal was broken, the letter was found to contain, "A sentiment from George Peabody of London," "Education—A Debt Due From Present to Future Generations," and was accompanied by a gift of \$20,000.00, for the purpose of establishing a Lyceum for the delivery of lectures, and a Library, both of which should be free to the inhabitants of the town. This gift was increased before his death to \$200,000.00.

On June 28, 1852, a town meeting was held at which time resolves prepared and submitted were unanimously adopted, accepting the gift of George Peabody.

It was voted, "That the institution established by this donation be called and known as the Peabody Institute, and that this name be inscribed in legible characters upon the front of the building, to be erected, that, in future years, our children may be reminded of their fathers' benefactor and that strangers may read the name of him whom Danvers will always be proud to claim as her son."

George Peabody approved of the proceeding of the town relative to the gift.

The officers of the Institute are: A Board of Trustees chosen by the City and another board, chosen by the Trustess, called the Lyceum and Library Committee.

Soon after Mr. Peabody's donation of \$20,000, he gave to the Trustees another donation of \$10,000, stipulating that \$17,000 should be used for land and building, \$10,000 as a permanent fund, and \$3,000 for the library.

The westerly part of the Wallis estate was purchased for the Peabody Institute.

The original building was about eighty-two by fifty feet of brick and



DANVERS SQUARE IN 1828, NOW PEABODY South Meeting House, 1711-1836. Lowell Street, District No. 11 School House where George Peabody went to school. In the foreground, the encampment of the Danvers Light Infantry.



freestone, with a library and committee room on the lower floor, and a lecture hall above. It cost \$15,000.

On August 20, 1853, the corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies, with Hon. Abbott Lawrence, an intimate friend of George Peabody, presiding.

The building was finished the following year and dedicated September 29, 1854. Hon. Rufus Choate delivered the address on that occasion.

The departments of the Peabody Institute are: The Library and Reading Room, the Children's Library, added in 1926, and the Eben Dale Sutton Reference Library.

The Trustees of the Peabody Institute wish to take this opportunity to express their sincere appreciation to all who have given so generously of their time and money, making this Library one of the finest in the country.

#### LIBRARIANS

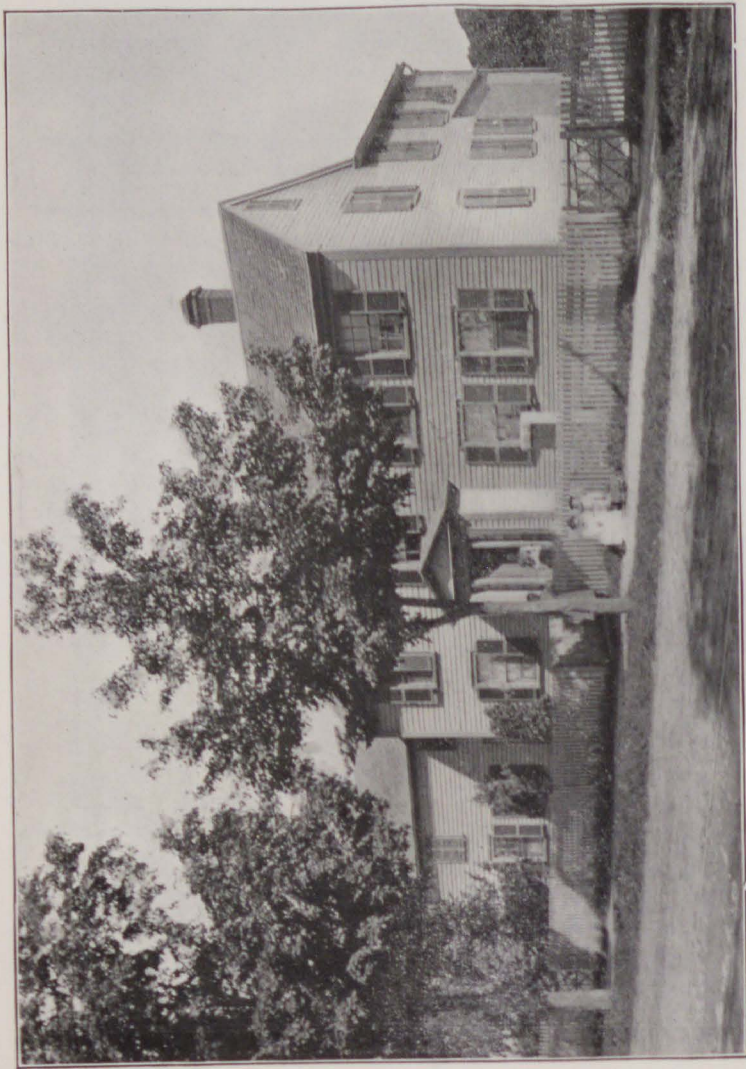
FITCH POOLE	1854	J. WARREN UPTON	1880 - 1898
EUGENE B. HINKLEY	1854 - 1856	LYMAN P. OSBORN	1898 - 1915
FITCH POOLE	1856 - 1873	JOHN E. KEEFE	1915 - 1936
THEODORE M. OSBORN	1873 - 1880	NATHAN F. MASTERSON	1936 -

#### ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

MADOLYN E. MURPHY	1927 -
ESTHER L. JOHNSON	1926 -

#### CUSTODIANS

JOHN H. TEAGUE	1853 - 1881	J. MURRAY WILSON	1918 - 1923
I. A. DROWNE	1881 -	JAMES H. FRAME	1923 - 1936
JOHN D. MCKEEN	1881 - 1918	JOHN J. MAHONEY	1936 -



BIRTHPLACE OF GEORGE PEABODY, FEBRUARY 18, 1795  
Tablet placed by Peabody Historical Society, June 16, 1962.

## GEORGE PEABODY

George Peabody, the son of Thomas and Judith Dodge Peabody, was born February 18, 1795, in a house still standing in Peabody, on the northerly side of Washington Street, the old Boston Road. He was a descendant of Lieut. Francis Peabody, who emigrated from St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England, in 1698, and settled in Topsfield, Massachusetts, where he built the first grist mill and became one of the leading citizens. He married Mary, daughter of Reginald Foster, who was mentioned by Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion" and the "Lady of the Lake."

On June 16, 1902, the Peabody Historical Society erected a tablet at his birthplace, 205 Washington Street.

George Peabody was born a poor boy, with very little opportunity for an education. The little District School which he attended was located just beyond the South Church on Lowell Street.

One of the studies which came easy to him was penmanship, and his handwriting became very beautiful, and no doubt had something to do with his success in life.

His school days were over at the age of twelve, as his parents could not afford to send him to school any longer. Once he told school children, "There is not a youth within the sound of my voice, whose early opportunities and advantages are not very much greater than mine. I have never ceased to feel and lament the want of that early education, which is now so freely offered to each of you." It was for this reason that he gave great sums of money later in life, in behalf of the education of the young.

George Peabody is said to have told the story that the first dollar he ever earned was while he was a school boy, for tending a little booth for the sale of apples and other delicacies at a celebration. He stuck to his post and was rewarded for his faithfulness with a dollar which he said gave him more pleasure than any transaction in all the great and successful financial operations of his later life.

For the next four years he worked as a shop boy in the country store of Mr. Sylvester Proctor, on what is known today as Main Street. George Peabody was a good boy, honest and industrious, but at the age of fifteen he longed for a change. He wanted to engage in business. Consequently,





TABLET AT BIRTHPLACE OF GEORGE PEABODY  
No. 205 Washington St., Peabody, Mass.



in 1811 he became a clerk in the dry goods store of his elder brother, David Peabody, at Newburyport, Massachusetts.

His father died a few weeks later, and soon after, the great fire of Newburyport occurred and destroyed his brother's business—thus throwing him out of employment at the age of sixteen. He was without funds, a position, or influential friends.

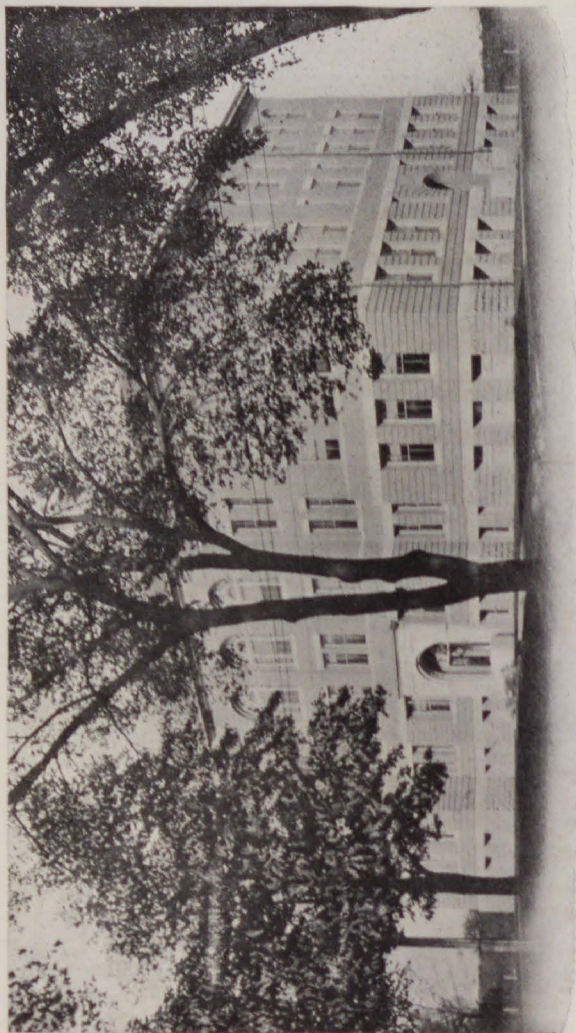
On May 4, 1811, he sailed from Newburyport with his uncle, for Georgetown, D. C., where they engaged in business together. In 1814 George Peabody entered into partnership in the wholesale dry goods business with Mr. Elisha Riggs at Georgetown, D. C. Mr. Riggs furnished the capital and Mr. Peabody conducted the business as the active partner.

During the War of 1812, he joined a volunteer company of Artillery and did active military duty at Fort Warburton, which commanded the river approach to the city of Washington, the capitol.

After the war was over he returned to his business, and in 1815 the house of Riggs & Peabody moved to Baltimore, Maryland. In 1822, other branches were established in Philadelphia and New York. Upon the retirement in 1830 of Mr. Riggs, Mr. Peabody became senior partner of the firm. In the course of his business he made several trips to Europe, going first to London in 1827.

In July, 1843, he retired from the firm of "Peabody, Riggs & Co." and established himself in London where he conducted a very extensive commercial and banking business in partnership with the father of J. Pierpont Morgan. They were known as merchants and money brokers under the firm name of George Peabody & Co., of Warnford Court, London, England. He was remarkably successful in the operation of this business and soon began to accumulate the foundation of the large fortune which he eventually attained.

A reception and dinner in honor of Mr. Peabody was held on October 9, 1856, at South Danvers by the people. Public and private buildings were elaborately decorated and across the streets arches of welcome were placed. There was a grand procession, in which the schools formed a prominent part. A full account of this procession including a sketch of the Peabody Institute at that time, was published by order of the Committee of Arrangements of the Town of Danvers.



"PEABODY" HIGH SCHOOL, CENTRAL ST., PEABODY, MASS., 1903  
Photographed by George W. Hersey

No greater tribute we of the present generation can pay to perpetuate the memory of George Peabody than to have our high school known as the "Peabody High School," named for him.

The following is a copy of Mr. Peabody's letter to the committee of the High Schools of Danvers in 1854.

LONDON, 30th Nov. 1853

*To the Committee of the Holten and  
Peabody High Schools of Danvers,*

GENTLEMEN:

In acknowledging the compliment paid me by giving my name to the High School of the South Parish in Danvers, it is my wish to confer on the schools over which you preside, some more substantial benefit than appertains to a name.

I will transmit to you in the autumn of 1854 the sum of two hundred dollars, and will continue to send the same sum annually (provided the results shall be satisfactory), during my life, to be expended as rewards of merit to the pupils at their yearly examinations.

Very respectfully and truly yours,

GEORGE PEABODY

On August 5, 1867, Mr. Peabody established a fund of \$2,000 for the medals to replace his annual gift of \$200.

Other Gifts of George Peabody were:—A liberal contribution in 1835 toward the erection of the Lexington Monument—a memorial to the Minute Men from Danvers who fell on April 19, 1775, at the Battle of Lexington. This monument is located at the corner of Main and Washington Streets in Peabody. In 1843, the South Church was destroyed by fire, at which time he made a generous donation towards the new church building.

A gift of \$15,000 to the American Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, London, in 1851. The following year he gave \$10,000 towards the Kane Arctic Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin.

In 1866, Mr. Peabody founded the Peabody Institute in the present town of Danvers.





MINIATURE OF QUEEN VICTORIA,  
Presented by her to George Peabody  
Now in the Peabody Institute, Peabody



He founded the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. It is a beautiful marble building on Mount Vernon Square, dedicated in 1866. The sum of money that Mr. Peabody gave was \$1,500,000.

In 1866, Harvard and Yale each received \$150,000 for museums. The same year he gave \$10,000 for a library in Thetford, Vermont.

The Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts, was founded by George Peabody. On February 26, 1867, he gave \$140,000 by which the museum of the East India Marine Society, founded in 1799, and the Natural History Collection of the Essex Institute, begun in 1834, were combined in an institution for the "promotion of Science and Useful Knowledge in the County of Essex."

George Peabody established the Peabody Education Fund for the South on February 7, 1867 and by 1869 he had given a total of \$3,000,000 for the promotion of a common school educational system, and the professional training of teachers. In 1875 the Peabody Normal College was started in Nashville, Tennessee. It was a model for Normal Schools throughout the South. In 1909 the Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund caused the Peabody Normal College to become the George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville.

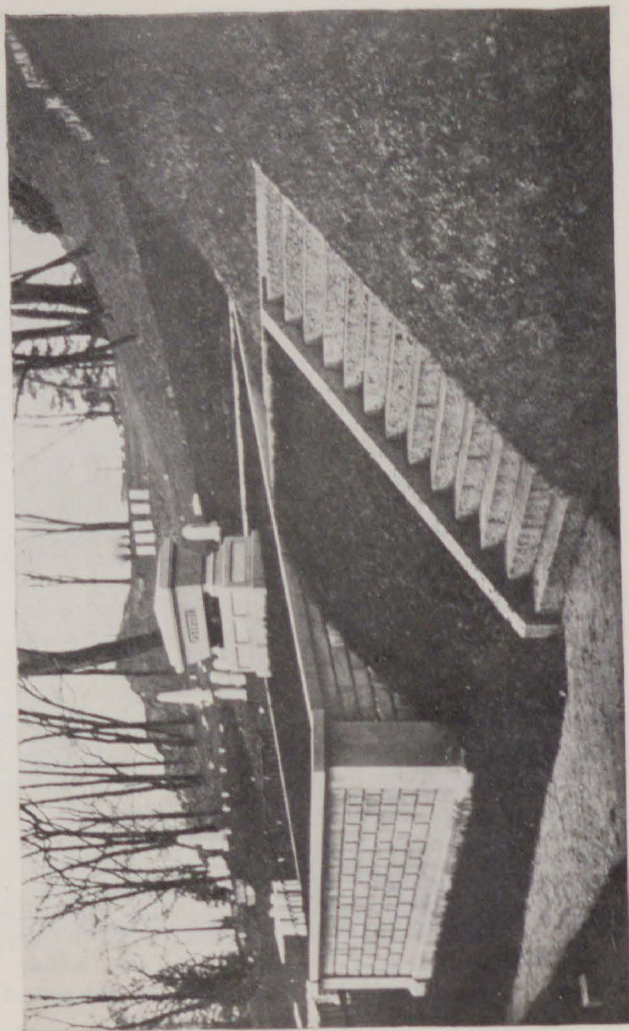
On March 16, 1867, the Congress of the United States ordered a gold medal be given to George Peabody of Massachusetts for his great gift to the South. On one side of the medal was his portrait in profile, on the opposite side, an inscription, "The people of the United States to George Peabody in acknowledgment of his beneficent promotion of universal education."

He also made gifts of \$15,000 for a library at Georgetown, D.C., and \$75,000 for a Memorial Church, and \$25,000 for a Library at Georgetown, Massachusetts, the home of his mother.

He gave \$25,000 to Kenyon College, Gambia, Ohio, \$25,000 to Phillips Academy, Andover, and \$15,000 to Newburyport, Massachusetts, for enlarging the library.

It was in 1862 that George Peabody established the Peabody Trust Fund, which eventually amounted to \$3,000,000. The purpose of this fund was to build homes for the deserving poor of London.

The London corporation conferred upon their illustrious benefactor



BURIAL PLACE OF GEORGE PEABODY WHO DIED IN LONDON NOVEMBER 4, 1869  
Buried in Harmony Grove Cemetery, February 8, 1870

the "Freedom of the City."\* This gift was enclosed in a gold box. Queen Victoria, upon his refusal of a baronetcy, sent him an autographed letter, accompanied by a miniature portrait of herself in enamel on gold and framed in gold, as a recognition of his munificent gift to the poor of London. Another gold box was given to him by the Fishmongers Company, one of the most ancient guilds of London. These and many other valuable gifts were presented by Mr. Peabody to the Peabody Institute in Peabody, Massachusetts where they are treasured in lasting memory of his benefactions.

The people of London, by public subscription, erected a statue of George Peabody seated in a chair. This statue, by William Wetmore Story, of Salem, was placed in front of the Royal Exchange, London's center of finance and commerce. Mr. Peabody was in America when the statue was unveiled by the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII.

A replica of this statue was presented to the City of Baltimore by Robert Garrett, for many years President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It stands in front of the Peabody Institute there.

When George Peabody came to South Danvers in the fall of 1866, it occurred to the Trustees of the Peabody Institute that he would enjoy meeting the school children in whose welfare he had always had such an interest. The day was set for the occasion and the Institute hall was filled to capacity.

One of the pleasing incidents was the exhibition, for the first time, of the full length painting of Mr. Peabody, by British artists of London. Mr. Peabody was dissatisfied with the painting by Healey, so had it removed from the massive frame, and the present painting put in its place.

Another incident of this occasion was the announcement by Mr. Peabody that he had received a letter from Mrs. Eliza Sutton, in which she proposed giving \$20,000 to the Trustees to be known as the Eben Dale Sutton Fund, in memory of her little son, the income of which should be annually used to purchase books of a standard character for the Eben Dale Sutton Reference Library, a separate department of the general library.

It was with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction that Mr. Peabody accepted this gift.

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\*May 22, 1862. The five Americans to whom the "Freedom of the City" of London has been given are: George Peabody, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore Roosevelt, Gen. John J. Pershing, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower.



HERE  
WERE DEPOSITED  
FROM NOV. 12 TO DEC. 11  
1869  
THE REMAINS OF  
GEORGE PEABODY  
THEN REMOVED TO HIS NATIVE COUNTRY  
AND BURIED AT DANVERS NOW PEABODY  
IN MASSACHUSETTS.

"I have prayed my heavenly Father day by day  
That I might be enabled before I died to shew my gratitude  
For the blessings which he has bestowed upon me  
By doing some great good to my fellow men."  
"Let your light so shine before men  
That they may see your good works  
and glorify your Father  
which is in Heaven."

*The above Memorial Inscription may be seen on a tablet in the floor  
of Westminster Abbey, London, in the center of the Nave between the  
West Door and the Choir Screen.*



On January 28, 1867, Mrs. Sutton placed the fund in the hands of the Trustees of the Peabody Institute.

Extensive additions were made to the Institute building in 1867, including an enlargement of the library room by an extension of forty-six feet in the rear of the building, the erection of a tower on the western side and the addition of a portico on the front of the building.

It was in the new addition to the Institute that a room was assigned to the Eben Dale Sutton Reference Library, and was furnished in a convenient and attractive manner by Mrs. Sutton.

A fine portrait of her son, in whose memory the gift was made, was placed on the wall.

This excellent reference library was opened to the public June 14, 1869.

Mrs. Sutton gave to the library many rare and valuable volumes, including Audubon's Birds of America, the original edition in four volumes of plates, and five volumes of explanatory text, Catlin's "Hunting Scenes of the American Indians," "Andros Tracks," "Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack" for 1779, "Pictorial Arts of Japan" by Anderson, in four volumes, "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam," and "Vanderbilt House and Collection" by Strahan.

## LIBRARIANS

### EBEN DALE SUTTON REFERENCE LIBRARY

MARY FLOYD	1870 - 1882	AUGUSTA F. DANIELS	1883 - 1908
SARAH E. PERKINS	1882 - 1883	FRANCES M. CARROLL	1908 - 1945
	LOUISE H. TEAGUE	1945 -	

This library is under the control of a sub-committee of the Lyceum and Library Committee of the Peabody Institute.

George Peabody died in London on November 4, 1869. The highest honors were paid him both in England and in his native country. A funeral service was held in Westminster Abbey, London, and his body lay there in state from November 12 to December 11, 1869. As soon as arrangements could be perfected, Queen Victoria had her majesty's largest ship, the "Queen Monarch," convey the body of the great philanthropist to his native land.



WESTMINSTER ABBEY, LONDON, ENGLAND

Prince Arthur accompanied the expedition which included an American ship. The prince attended the funeral services in this country as the representative of his mother, the queen. The only harbor the ship could enter safely was at Portland, Maine. Into this port she entered, and with grand and solemn ceremony the body of George Peabody was delivered to the delegated authorities representing the government of the United States and his native town of Peabody.

The remains were transferred from Portland, Maine, to his native town which in 1868 had been renamed Peabody in his honor. The remains lay in state in the Peabody Institute. Funeral exercises were held in the South Church. The whole town was in mourning, bells were tolled, homes and buildings were draped in black. During the ceremony a wild snow storm sprang up through which the solemn procession wound its way slowly to the burial place which he had selected in Harmony Grove Cemetery.

No man in this country or any other country has ever exhibited such acts of splendid generosity. George Peabody's last whispered words were: "Danvers, Danvers, Don't Forget." He set an example that can never be lost to history.

On May 12, 1926, a bust of George Peabody was unveiled in the Hall of Fame, Washington, D. C.

*(The pictures used in this book were loaned through the courtesy of the Peabody Historical Society, Peabody, Mass.)*

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE  
PEABODY INSTITUTE LIBRARY  
1953

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